



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2007 Volume IV: Latino Cultures and Communities

I Know You Are, but What Am I? A Latino Literature Unit

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This curriculum unit immerses students in several genres of Latino literature with the dual purposes of exposing eleventh or twelfth grade students to a selection of Latino literature, and of raising multicultural awareness and appreciation. The goal is to feature Latino issues in the literature so that Latino students enjoy familiar models, while non-Latino students gain cultural knowledge and appreciation. Students work in groups with self-described immigrant characteristics which they have detailed in an identity profile; then they respond to the reading and film assignments according to these profiles. There is accompanying study of literary devices, while students learn to create identity profiles based on their invented immigration status, in a sustained role-playing activity.

Implementation of the unit spans a 5 to 7 day period in a block schedule, but is fully adaptable to a school year structured in two semesters, spanning a 2 to 3 week period, on a standard forty-minute class schedule. The lessons are designed for collaborative teamwork, and for direct instruction toward literary analysis and personal expressive writing. By the conclusion of the unit, students have information from the reading, and from periodic journaling activities that enable them to respond to a personal essay prompt. The personal essay serves as the summative assessment in this unit.

(Developed for English, grade 12; recommended for English, grades 11-12)

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